

Stan Merry stands near the monument marking a tribute to his father, Hortence.

A Dam for Dad

By KEITH L. MARTIN

Stan Merry wants you to know about his family.

Specifically, he wants you to know his father's legacy as a former Duxbury fire chief, and about the veterans of war that have also carried the Merry name into battle.

To commemorate their lives, Merry didn't go to town hall and ask for a monument or another street name (Merry Ave. was created in the 1930's as access to the land his family owned). Instead, he decided to create his own tribute to these members of the family.

This Saturday (Sept. 27) will mark the dedication of the Merry Dam off Modoc Street in honor of Hortence Merry, who served as Duxbury's fire chief from 1916-1942. He was also a veteran of the Spanish American War. The dam will also be a tribute to Stan's son, Alan, who served in Vietnam and to his nephew, Robert, a veteran of the Korean War. Stan, Alan and Robert are donating the memorial.

The 600-foot long, 15-foot high dam was constructed by

continued on page 7

continued from page one

Merry as a child and built up over the years to help hold water in a nearby cranberry bog.

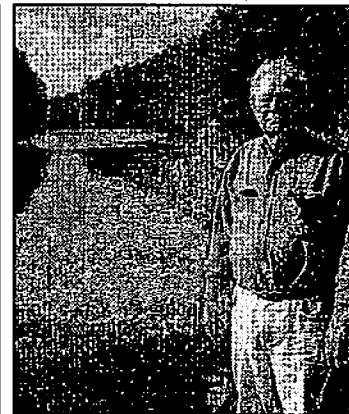
Merry, 88, has lived in Duxbury for most of his life and said that while his father helped to contribute both to the growth of the fire department and the town itself, there is nothing to mark his achievements.

"There is no memorial to him in town, so I thought I'd see what I could do," he said. "I remember from my youth when he bought the town forest and dedicated it to Mr. Knapp, the head of the old Powder Point School. There were also many, many areas in the fire department he saw improved all around."

During the ceremony, Fire Chief Bill Harriman will speak about the history of the town's fire department and the former fire chief's contributions during his 36 years of service.

"We are proud of our heritage and [Merry] was a significant part of that," said Harriman. "I'm glad Stan gave us the opportunity to remember his father and highlight the history of the fire

A Dam for Dad



Merry stands on the dam to be named for his father, overlooking the North Hill Marsh.

department."

In addition, a representative of the Veterans of Foreign Wars will be on hand to discuss the lives of numerous veterans from Duxbury. Many veterans are expected to attend. The fire department and VFW will also provide color guards for the event.

Merry, who tried several times himself to enlist, put in nearly 45 years of maritime service before being "loaned" to the U.S. Navy by General Dynamics Steel, working on several patents for equipment they use today, he said.

The centerpiece of the ceremony will be the unveiling of a monument made up of

three boulders, one of which is carved with the dedication to his father. The stone was carved by Bridgewater artist John Meehan, who studied stone trades in Barre, Vermont and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Carrara, Italy.

The ceremony might have never happened, had the town of Duxbury taken the land by eminent domain as it considered doing nearly four years ago over a dispute to raise the height of the dam. Merry put in a lot of work to control seepage issues the town said was harming a nearby well and kept the land which he hopes will be used by the town for years to come.

"I'm hoping it will be a sacred area," he said. "I've cleared the whole field near the dam and made an acre and a half or two of cleared land with cooperation from the town conservation commission. This year, there was even an Easter egg hunt for kids on the land, and that was nice."

Members of the public are invited to the ceremony to dedicate the dam Sept. 27 from 2 to 4 p.m. To get to the ceremony site, enter at 255 West Avenue and follow the signs to the dam.